

BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE REVIEW PANEL
MEETING MINUTES

Date: March 27, 2014

Meeting No.: 181

Project: Oliver Development

Phase: Schematic

Location: Oliver Neighborhood – East Baltimore

PRESENTATION:

Part I – Preston Street – 5 units and Bond Street in-fill - 2 units

Martha Cross of TRF Development Partners began the presentation by describing the changes and additions to these units since the last presentation as follows:

- a privacy fence between units at the rear of the properties;
- a 4 ft green strip at the rear property line;
- individual building planters on the front façade of the units;
- a clearer expression of “cornice “ at the tops of the units;
- more of a personalized look to the units including individual color accents;
- materials: combination of textures and color with “Hardy” board (flat panels) and Hardy plank (horizontal siding expression).

COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL:

The Panel felt that the latest design of these units showed major improvement and were headed in a good direction. There were, however, some issues that require further study and resolution:

1. **Exterior Privacy** – Several resident-to-resident privacy issues continue in the latest design – particularly as in balcony adjacencies and in situations where balconies overlook adjacent properties.
2. **Trash can storage** – there remains some confusion on how trash and garbage is handled; secured individual locations for trash are encouraged.
3. **Entrance cover** – investigate providing either recessed entrances or canopy cover at main entrances.
4. **Rain garden locations** – address the locations of rain-garden/storm retention planters with downspout locations.
5. **Narrow windows on rear façade** – suggested that a larger window should be studied.

PANEL ACTION:

Recommend Schematic approval of these units, addressing the above comments.

Part II - 2 Unit Preston Street Grouping – Triangular site

Richard Garber, Architect with GRO Architecture presented changes to these units since the last presentation, which included the following:

- change in color accents from lime green to red/orange;
- 5 street trees along Preston Street;
- a continuous raised planter at the triangular corner unit;
- re-orientation of the raised storm retention planters between the two units;
- remote shared trash/garbage area on Preston Street;
- materials same as previously presented – i.e. vertically oriented corrugated metal panel.

COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL:

The Panel generally felt that very little response had been made to earlier Panel concerns regarding the appropriateness of the design to its Baltimore row house context. The specific areas of concern in these two units are as follows:

1. **Site Configuration** – Consider reconfiguring the shared property line such that more rear yard is given to the triangular end unit; Provide individual gated access to small rear alley.
2. **Trash can storage** – remote garbage can storage at one end of the units doesn't appear equitable. Individual, rather than shared trash areas, within the property lines, would be more desirable and avoid possible conflicts between neighbors;
3. **Clarify definition individual units** – the front façade still reads as one continuous building rather than two separate units. Consider creating a more traditional idea of a “sally port” between the two units for direct access to rear yards and resolution of the trash issue;
4. **Corrugated metal treatment** – Several Panel members questioned the dependence on and appropriateness of the industrial “shed” aesthetic and the corrugated metal building material. The photos shared of other projects employing this approach seemed more successful, often running the corrugated metal horizontally and almost always employs another material for contrast and relief.
5. **Entrance cover** – investigate providing either recessed entrances or canopy cover at main entrances.
6. **“Fit”** – the current design appears to purposefully reject all references to context in form, material and coloration. The Panel suggests finding a more fitting balance to context and “creativity” with the introduction of “harmony” as an additional goal. Consider one or two fewer major design gestures for these two units.

PANEL ACTION:

Recommend withholding Schematic approval of these units, addressing the comments above and from the previous review on February 20, 2013.

Attending: Martha Cross, Hanifah Nakalembe - TRF Development Partners
Richard Garber, Architect - GRO Architecture
Branan Brooks

Ms. Jones Allen and Ms. Meany, Messr. Bowden* and Haresign - UDARP Panel
Director Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Gaymon, Tamara Woods –Planning
Department